

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

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ACTION EAP-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CEA-01	CIAE-00	COME-00
	CTME-00	DINT-00	DOT-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EXIM-01
	E-00	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-01	FRB-00	H-01	TEDE-00
	INR-00	ITC-01	L-00	MOFM-04	MOF-03	AC-01	NSAE-00
	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00
	SP-00	SSO-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	PMB-00	DSCC-00
	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/018W	

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FM AMEMBASSY HANOI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9553
INFO SECDD WASHDC
NSC WASHDC
JOINT STAFF WASHDC
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI//J5/FPA//
DIA WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L HANOI 000765

SIPDIS

STATE ALSO FOR EAP/BCLTV, EB, INR/EAP/SEA, INR/B
NSC FOR RAVIC HUSO
SECDEF FOR ISA/EAP/LSTERN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 4/04/2010

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [ECON](#) [PINR](#) [VM](#) [DPOL](#)

SUBJECT: NOTES FROM SECDEF VISIT TO VIETNAM: PM KHAI TENSE, ANXIOUS TO DELIVER MESSAGE
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REF: A) HANOI 686 B) HANOI 548 C) HANOI 530

1. (U) CLASSIFIED BY DCM DENNIS HARTER;
REASONS 1.5 (B) AND (D).

2. (C) REFTELS HAVE REPORTED EXTENSIVELY ON THE VISIT OF
SECRETARY OF DEFENSE COHEN TO VIETNAM, WHICH PROVIDED A

SIPDIS

STRONG BOOST TO BILATERAL RELATIONS. ONE INTERESTING
SIDEBAR TO HIS VISIT WAS THE ON-AGAIN, OFF-AGAIN MEETING
WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, PHAN VAN KHAI. A MEETING WITH KHAI
WAS PART OF THE ORIGINAL PROGRAM PROPOSED BY THE GVN AND
REQUESTED BY THE U.S. THE VIETNAMESE, THROUGH THE MINISTRY
OF DEFENSE (MOD), PROPOSED A MEETING TIME THAT CONFLICTED
WITH THE JTF SITE VISIT (ARRANGED UNILATERALLY BY THE U.S.
SIDE), AND SECDEF STAFF CUT THE MEETING FROM THE SCHEDULE
BECAUSE OF THE CONFLICT. THEN THE PM'S OFFICE CALLED DCM
SAYING "THE PRIME MINISTER WANTS THE MEETING." DCM AND PM'S
OFFICE WORKED TO FIND OTHER TIMES BEFORE AND AFTER LUNCH,
AND EVENTUALLY A MUTUALLY AGREEABLE TIME WAS ARRANGED. (PM
WAS EN ROUTE HCMC THE EVENING OF THAT DAY OR EARLY THE NEXT
DAY. THE PM COULD NOT MEET EARLIER BECAUSE OF A CABINET
MEETING AT LUNCH, AND SO THE U.S. SIDE SQUEEZED ITS
AFTERNOON SCHEDULE.)

3. (C) PRESSING FOR A MEETING AT THE LAST MINUTE LIKE THIS
IS VERY UNUSUAL FOR THE VIETNAMESE. THE GVN, OR THE PRIME
MINISTER HQSELF, MAY HAVE QLT HE "NEEDED" TO MEET SECDEF
IN ORDER TO GIVE THE APPROPRIATE CACHET FOR THE VISIT. IN
ADDITION, THE PRIME MINISTER LIKELY WAS "DELIVERING A
MESSAGE" TO THE USG. INTERESTINGLY, MOD DID NOT WANT TO
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INVOLVE ITSELF IN RE-SCHEDULING THE PM'S MEETING. EXTERNAL
RELATIONS AT MOD WAS ANGRY THAT THE PM'S OFFICE HAD
CONTACTED THE EMBASSY DIRECTLY. UNTIL A FEW HOURS BEFORE,
THE MEETING HAD NOT BEEN OFFICIALLY CONFIRMED AND PLACED ON
THE SCHEDULE. THE PM AND MOD OFFICES WERE COORDINATING
WHETHER THE MEETING WOULD TAKE PLACE UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE.
(NOTE: PARTY GENERAL SECRETARY LE KHA PHIEU DID NOT ACCEPT
SECDEF'S PROPOSAL FOR A MEETING. END NOTE.)

4. (C) AS NOTED REF A, THERE WERE A COUPLE OF POINTED
MESSAGES THAT PRIME MINISTER KHAI DIRECTED TO SECDEF COHEN.
ON THE ONE HAND, WHEN DISCUSSING THE BILATERAL TRADE
AGREEMENT (BTA), KHAI MADE A CLEAR POINT OF SAYING VIETNAM
CANNOT COMPETE WITH OTHER COUNTRIES SUCH AS THE U.S. HE
SAID THAT, WITHIN THE BTA NEGOTIATIONS, THERE MUST BE
PROVISIONS THAT TAKE INTO ACCOUNT "THE REALITY THAT VIETNAM
IS AN UNDERDEVELOPED COUNTRY." KHAI ALSO MADE A PITCH FOR
INCREASED ASSISTANCE TO VIETNAM. LATER IN THE CONVERSATION,

KHAI ECHOED THESE THEMES, CLAIMING THE PROCESS OF GLOBALIZATION WOULD INCREASE THE NUMBER OF POOR PEOPLE. KHAI SAID VIETNAM RECOGNIZES GLOBALIZATION IS "THE INTERNATIONAL TENDENCY, WHICH WE CANNOT AVOID." BUT HE SAID EACH COUNTRY NEEDS TO CHOOSE ITS OWN APPROACH TO DEVELOP ITSELF AND RAISE LIVING STANDARDS.

15. (C) COMMENT: KHAI, WHO IS ONE OF THE LEADING TECHNOCRATS/REFORMISTS IN THE VIETNAMESE LEADERSHIP, HAS BEEN ON THE DEFENSIVE IN RECENT MONTHS, AND THERE IS SPECULATION HE MIGHT BE REPLACED AT THE NEXT PARTY CONGRESS IN EARLY 2001. IN HIS MEETING WITH SECDEF COHEN, KHAI LOOKED DRAWN AND TENSE, LESS ANIMATED THAN USUAL -- THOUGH
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HE IS HARDLY CHARISMATIC ON HIS BEST DAYS. KHAI MADE A DELIBERATE POINT OF ADDRESSING SEVERAL POINTED MESSAGES, SAYING TWICE THAT HE WANTED BOTH THE SECRETARY AND THE AMBASSADOR TO NOTE HIS WORDS. KHAI MAY FEEL UNDER PRESSURE FROM MORE CONSERVATIVE AND IDEOLOGICAL ELEMENTS IN THE LEADERSHIP, AND HIS DELIVERY OF THESE MESSAGES TO SECDEF MAY REFLECT THAT. END COMMENT.
PETERSON

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